
IN THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listing of claims in the application:

1. (Presently Amended) A system configured to support ~~for supporting~~ a female urethra, comprising:

an introducer needle having a first end and a second end, each said end having a flattened portion with an opening therethrough;

a handle having a latch mechanism which engages the opening in the flattened portion of the first end of the introducer needle;

an implant member having an end; and

a connector joining the end of the implant member to the flattened portion of the second end of the introducer needle, wherein said connector comprises:

a central portion;

a first arm pivotally mounted to the central portion and having a first opening at a first end; and

a second arm pivotally mounted to the central portion and having a first projection therefrom, the first projection being positioned so that when the first arm and the second arm move together, the first projection is received in the first opening.

2. (Presently Amended) A system according to claim 1, wherein at least a portion of the introducer needle is curved and symmetrical.

3. (Presently Amended) A system according to claim 1, wherein the flattened portion of the first end differs in at least one of size and shape from the flattened portion ~~end~~ of the second end ~~portion~~.

4. (Original) A system according to claim 1, wherein the introducer needle has a flared section having a cross-sectional profile that, in a given direction, is at least as large as a cross-sectional profile of the connector in the given direction.

Claims 5-34 (Cancelled)

35. (Presently Amended) An introducer needle configured to surgically introduce a urethral implant in a patient for use in a surgical procedure, comprising:

- a first flat spatulated section;
- a straight portion connected to a distal end of said first flat spatulated section;
- a curved portion connected to a distal end of said straight portion;
- a second flat spatulated section; ~~and~~
- a flared section connected to a distal end of said curved portion and connected, at its distal end, to the first flat spatulated section, the flared section having a cross-sectional profile that covers a cross-sectional profile of the first flat spatulated section, wherein at least one said flat spatulated section has a tip and a constant width portion disposed between the tip and the central portion, and an opening formed in that said flat spatulated section; and
- a handle comprising a housing having an elongated portion, the elongated portion having a distal end with an opening therethrough, the opening being dimensioned to receive the flat spatulated section and hold the flat spatulated section in a connecting position in the housing, said handle further comprising an elastically-biased latch portion having a projection dimensioned and disposed so that when the flat spatulated section is received by the opening and is held in the connecting position, the projection cooperates with the opening to secure the handle to the introducer needle.

36. (Original) An introducer needle as in claim 35, wherein the first flat spatulated section, the flared section, the straight portion, the curved portion, and the second flat spatulated section are all integrally formed.

37-119 (Canceled)

120. (New) A system according to claim 1, wherein said introducer needle has a rounded tip.

121. (New) A system according to claim 1, wherein said introducer needle has an asymmetric shape.

122. (New) A system according to claim 1, wherein each of said flattened portions has a tip, and the tip of the first flattened portion has a first configuration and the tip of the second flattened portion has a second configuration that is different from the first configuration.

123. (New) A system according to claim 1, wherein said introducer needle has an arcuate shape.

124. (New) A system according to claim 1, wherein at least a portion of said introducer needle has an oval cross section.

125. (New) A system according to claim 1, wherein at least a portion of said introducer needle has a circular cross-section.

126. (New) A system according to claim 1, wherein said implant member comprises:

- a central portion having a first end and a second end;
- a first arm joined to the first end; and
- a second arm joined to the second end.

127. (New) A system according to claim 126, wherein the first and second arms have a plurality of openings running therethrough.

128. (New) A system according to claim 127, wherein the opening are arranged in a two-dimensional pattern.

129. (New) A system according to claim 1, wherein the implant member comprises an elongated body made of a flexible material having a first end, a second end, and a support portion, the support portion having an axis running along the length of the implant member, the support portion having a plurality of slits arranged along at least a portion of the axis.

130. (New) A system according to claim 129, wherein the slits are selected from the group consisting of V-shaped, semicircular, rectangular, oval, and arrowhead shaped.

131. (New) A system according to claim 126, wherein each of the first and second ends has an opening therein.